



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

APR 01 2008

Reply To
Attn Of: AWT-107

George Edwardson, President
Price Leavitt, Sr., Executive Director
Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
P.O. Box 934
Barrow, Alaska 99723

Re: Shell OCS Air Permit – Request to Extend the Public Comment Period

Dear Messrs. Edwardson and Leavitt:

Thank you for meeting with us last week. My staff and I enjoyed our visit and appreciated the opportunity to share with you an overview of our preliminary permitting action. We look forward to visiting with you again.

We have received your March 27, 2008, letter requesting that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) extend the public comment period an additional 30 days for our preliminary decision to issue an air quality permit to Shell Offshore, Inc. Your request is based on the fact that the current timeline allows only two working days after the last public hearing to submit comments. The published public comment period for this preliminary permit action began on February 25, 2008, and is scheduled to conclude today, April 1, 2008. This 36-day public comment period is longer than the 30 day public comment period required under Title 40, Part 124 of the Code of Federal Regulations – EPA Procedures for Decision Making.

As Dan Meyer of my staff indicated to you over the phone yesterday, EPA is denying your request to extend the public comment period. We understand that it may be challenging for members of your community to keep abreast of public hearings while at the same time preparing for the spring whaling harvest. Still, we feel that the existing 36 day public comment period allows adequate time for comments on this preliminary permit action. Accordingly, the public comment period will close later today on April 1, 2008. We encourage all interested parties to participate in the decision making process, and we are committed to carefully considering all comments that we receive before making a final decision on the permit.

Although the public comment period will close later today, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS) and the native village tribal governments may request government-to-

government consultation regarding this preliminary permitting action. If you would like to meet again with EPA on this matter, please contact Dan Mahar of my staff at your earliest convenience. Dan can be reached at 206.553.7079, and he will help coordinate further government-to-government consultation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Albright', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Richard Albright, Director
Office of Air, Waste and Toxics

cc: Johnny Aiken, Director, NSB Planning Department
Martha Falk, ICAS Natural Recourse/EPA Director
Karla Kolash, NSB Mayors Special Assistant
Barrett Ristroph, NSB Law Department